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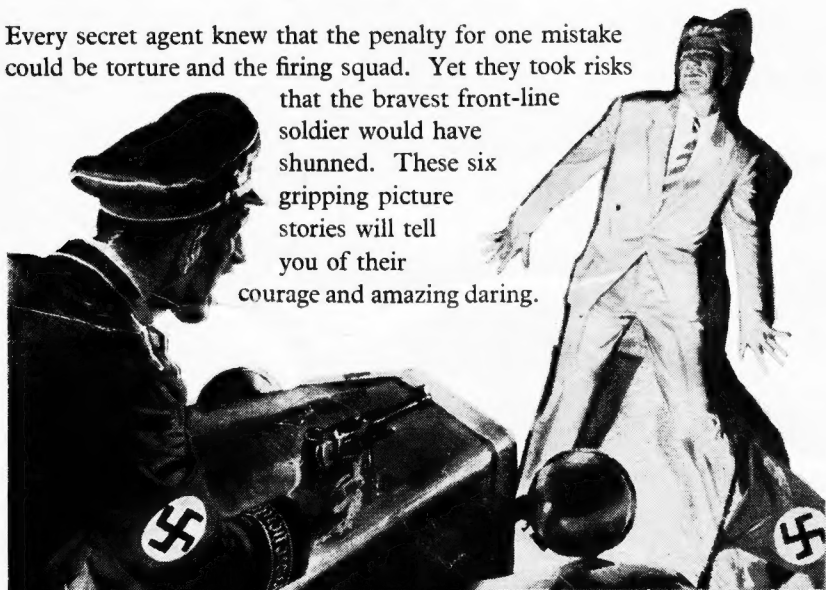
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SECRET AGENT
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MOB RULE

THERE IS A SAYING THAT NO MAN IS ALL BAD. CHECK THE CRIME FILES COVERING THE BLOOD-STAINED ERA OF THE CHICAGO GANG WARS. YOU WILL FIND IT EVEN APPLIES TO A HOODLUM SO VICIOUS THAT IN THE ANNALS OF INFAMY HE WILL ALWAYS BEAR THE NAME OF — MAD DOG SHAFER!



FRANCE, 1918. ALL MORNING, THE BIG GUNS HAD BOMBARDED THE GERMAN LINES, WHILE THE AMERICAN "DOUGHBOYS" WAITED IN THEIR MUDDY TRENCHES FOR THE ORDER TO GO OVER THE TOP...



A SMALL, THIN DOUGHBOY IN A NEW KHAKI UNIFORM, TURNED EAGERLY TO THE LAST SPEAKER...



CORPORAL BEN NOLAN TURNED TO THE MAN NEAREST HIM...

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE POOR KID'S BEEN IN ACTION! NO WONDER HE'S SCARED! LET'S HAVE A WORD WITH HIM, SWEDE.

YA! THIS WAITING'S BAD ENOUGH. IS WORSE WHEN YOU GOT NO FRIEND TO TALK TO!



THE YOUNG SOLDIER WAS PATHETICALLY EAGER TO TALK...

MY NAME'S NICK SHAFTER! UNTIL YESTERDAY I WAS IN REAR ECHELON SUPPLIES. THEN LAST NIGHT THEY SENT ME - HERE! I - I'VE NOT EVEN BEEN TRAINED TO FIGHT!

I'M SWEDE OHLSON - AND THIS IS MY BUDDY, BEN NOLAN! WHEN WE GO OVER THE TOP, YOU STICK WITH US, HEY?



THE RIFLE WAS SHAKING IN NICK SHAFTER'S HANDS...

I'M BOUND TO BE KILLED! I'VE ONLY FIRED A GUN ONCE - ON A TARGET RANGE - AND THAT WAS A YEAR AGO! I - I WON'T STAND A CHANCE!

WE'LL LOOK AFTER YOU, NICK. LIKE SWEDE SAID - YOU STICK CLOSE TO US!



MINUTES LATER, THE THUNDERING
BARRAGE CEASED...



THE BARRAGE HAD POUNDED THE VILLAGE TO RUBBLE – BUT
NOT THE GERMANS WHO HAD OCCUPIED IT...



NEXT MOMENT...



NICK SHAFTER WAS IN A PANIC ALREADY...



THEY FOUND THE YOUNGSTER ALMOST CRAZED WITH FEAR...



BUT EVEN AS THEY TRIED TO SHOVE THE STRUGGLING RECRUIT THROUGH THE DOOR...

AAARGH!

THE HUNS ARE POUNDING THE REST OF THE LADS INTO THE GROUND!

WHAT WE DO, BEN? IF WE JOIN THEM NOW - WE GET KILLED, TOO!

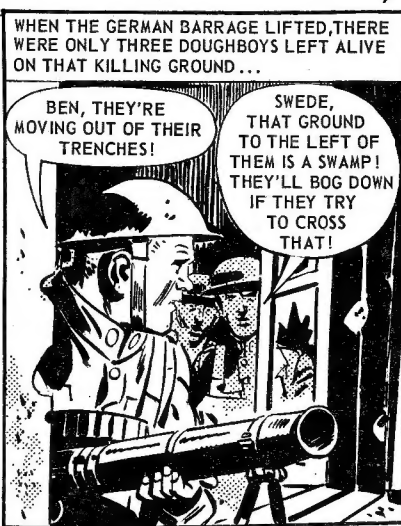


IN THE U.S. COMMAND POST...

GENERAL, THERE WON'T BE A MAN LEFT ALIVE, UNLESS WE HELP THEM!

WE CAN'T HELP THEM. I'VE JUST SPOKEN TO THE ARTILLERY. THAT BARRAGE USED UP ALL THEIR AMMO - AND THE SUPPLY WAGONS ARE STUCK IN THE MUD. THEY WON'T HAVE MORE SHELLS FOR ANOTHER HOUR AT LEAST!





NICK SHAFTER'S CRY BECAME A SQUEAL OF PAIN AS BEN NOLAN SLAPPED HIS WHITE AND QUIVERING FACE.

I - I'M
AFRAID! I -
EEEEAAI

CUT THAT OUT! WHEN I
GIVE THE ORDER, BE A MAN
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YOUR
LIFE - AND FIGHT BACK!



BEN WAITED TILL THE MENACING MASS OF GREY-GREEN FIGURES WERE PACKED TIGHT INTO THE 'LANE'. THEN...

NOW!
SWEDE!
NICK! LET
'EM HAVE
IT!

DONNER
UND BLITZEN!
THERE ARE -
ARRGH!



BUT NICK SHAFTER HAD
NOT FIRED A SHOT...

THERE'RE
HUNDREDS OF
THEM! WE
DON'T STAND A
CHANCE!

NO! NOT
ME! PLEASE!
I'M NOT FIGHTING
YOU! I WANT
TO SURRENDER!
DON'T SHOOT
ME...!



EVEN ABOVE THE GUNFIRE, NICK SHAFTER'S SCREAM FOR MERCY REACHED THE EARS OF THE GERMANS...

NO - NO!
HE'S GOING TO
KILL ME!



IT WAS PURE TERROR THAT MADE SHAFTER PULL THE TRIGGER - AND A TWIST OF FATE THAT MADE HIS BULLET FLY STRAIGHT TO THE TARGET.

AAAARGH!

I HIT
HIM! I
HIT HIM!



HE WAS A GIANT! HE - HE COULD HAVE BROKEN ME IN TWO - WITH ONE HAND! BUT I - KILLED HIM!



THEN NICK SHAFTER
DISCOVERED SOMETHING ELSE...



I'VE HIT
ANOTHER ONE -
AND ANOTHER!
I - I'M A
DEAD-SHOT!

HEY, BEN!
OUR FRIGHTENED
RABBIT HAS TURNED
INTO A REAL FIGHTING
ROOSTER! AND HE
KNOWS HOW TO USE
THAT RIFLE!

BEN FOUND NICK SHAFTER GAZING AT HIS
RIFLE WITH EYES SHINING WITH WONDER...



WITH THIS -
I DON'T NEED
TO BE AFRAID ANY
MORE! WITH A GUN,
I'M AS GOOD AS ANY
MAN! BETTER,
IN FACT!

COME ON,
NICK! WE'RE
MOVING OUT NOW,
BEFORE THE
HUNS DREAM UP
SOMETHING NASTY
FOR US!

BUT BEN AND SWEDE HAD ONLY RUN A FEW YARDS
WHEN THEY REALISED NICK WAS NOT WITH THEM...

THE FOOL!
HE'S GONE KILL-
CRAZY! WE CAN'T
LEAVE HIM THERE!
WE'LL HAVE TO GO
BACK FOR HIM
AGAIN!



NEXT SECOND,
IT HAPPENED...

MORTARS!
THEY'VE HIT
THE HOUSE!

IF HE
HADN'T GOT
THIS OBSESSION
TO KILL MORE HUNS -
HE'D HAVE BEEN
IN THE CLEAR
WITH US!



WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED, THEY SAW NICK - AND SO DID THE GERMANS...

I - I'M
CAUGHT!
HELP ME!
PLEASE! DON'T
LEAVE
ME!

SUFFERING
CATS! WE
CAN'T LEAVE
HIM THERE, SWEDE!
THE HUNS
ARE POTTING
AT HIM!



THE AIR AROUND THEM WAS ALIVE WITH WHIZZING LEAD, AS BEN AND SWEDE DRAGGED THE YOUNG SOLDIER FREE.

THAT'S
DONE IT!
NOW FOR PETE'S
SAKE - START
RUNNING!

MY RIFLE!
MUST TAKE
MY RIFLE!



BEN NOLAN SOON REALISED THAT TO KEEP RUNNING IN THE OPEN WAS ASKING FOR CERTAIN DEATH. . .

INTO THAT SHELLHOLE! WE'VE GOT TO TAKE COVER!

GOOD IDEA! AND WE CAN SHOOT BACK AT THEM! WITH GUNS, WE CAN STOP ANYTHING...!



BUT THE FIRE-POWER OF THE THREE DOUGHBOYS WAS NOT NEEDED...

IT'S OUR ARTILLERY, BEN! OUR BIG GUNS ARE GIVING THEM HELL!

AW, HECK! IF THE BIG GUNS HAD HELD-OFF FOR JUST A FEW MINUTES LONGER - WE COULD HAVE DOWNED SOME MORE OF THEM!



TWO DAYS LATER, SOME
MILES BEHIND THE FRONT...



I GOT NEWS
FOR YOU THREE
HEROES! THE
GENERAL'S GONNA
PIN A MEDAL ON
YOU! AND THAT
AIN'T ALL!

AW, HE CAN
KEEP HIS MEDALS!
ALL I WANT'S THE
CHANCE TO GET BACK
TO THE LINE...
AND DO SOME MORE
SHOOTING!

THE N.C.O.'S
GRIN BROADENED...



THE SHOOTING'S OVER,
SHAFTER. THAT WAS THE
OTHER NEWS I HAD FOR YOU!
FRITZ HAS THROWN IN
THE TOWEL!

YOU MEAN -
THE WAR'S OVER?
YAAAA-HOOOOOOOO!

WE GO BACK HOME!
THAT'S THE BEST NEWS
I EVER HEARD!

SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...



BY TOMORROW
WE'LL BE BACK
HOME IN CHICAGO!
SWEDE, WHAT ARE YOU
GOING TO DO ?

FOR ME IS
EASY, BEN. I
WAS A PRIZEFIGHTER
BEFORE I GO TO WAR.
IS THE ONLY JOB I
CAN DO WELL. FOR
ME, IS BACK TO
THE RING!



AND YOU,
BEN, YOU
STILL GOING
TO BE A
WRITER?

A JOURNALIST, SWEDE.
THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO BE.
I SAW TOO MUCH KILLING
OVER IN FRANCE. I'VE COME
TO HATE IT.. MAYBE AS A
NEWSPAPERMAN I CAN DO
SOMETHING TO STOP IT
HAPPENING AGAIN!



NICK - WHAT
YOU GOING
TO DO?

THE WAR TAUGHT ME THAT
A MAN WITH A GUN IN HIS
HAND HOLDS ALL THE ACES.
THE ARMY TAUGHT ME A
TRADE - HOW TO KILL! I
DON'T AIM TO FORGET THAT!



SHAFTER OBVIOUSLY MEANT EVERY WORD HE SAID...



A YEAR PASSED, THEN FOUR MORE. IN THAT TIME, THE GANG LORDS CAME, AND GREW RICHER AND MORE POWERFUL, UNTIL THEY THREATENED TO RULE THE WHOLE CITY OF CHICAGO...

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF BLACKIE GALLO, PUNKS!



WORKING SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE LAW, COURAGEOUS, DEDICATED NEWSPAPERMEN LIKE BEN NOLAN USED WHAT WEAPONS THEY COULD TO HIT BACK AT THE MARCH OF CRIME...

HERE'S YOUR FRONT PAGE SET UP, BEN! BUT GALLO'S GOT SOME PRETTY SMART LAWYERS! I DAREN'T RUN IT - UNLESS YOU DIG UP SOME PROOF!

I'M JUST ABOUT TO GET PROOF, CHIEF! THAT WAS LEFTY HANSON ON THE PHONE! HE USED TO BE ONE OF GALLO'S MOBSTERS! NOW HE'S PREPARED TO SPILL THE WORKS!





NEITHER MAN COULD SEE THE GLEAMING LIMOUSINE DRIFTING SLOWLY DOWN THE STREET OUTSIDE...

NORMALLY, I WOULDN'T LIFT A FINGER TO HELP A RAT LIKE YOU, HANSON - BUT BLACKIE GALLO'S THE KING BEHIND THE CITY'S RACKETS. AND WE WANT BLACKIE!

I'VE GOT THE DOPE YOU WANT. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME LEAVE TOWN AS WELL, NOLAN. GALLO'S HIRED A NEW BUNCH OF GUNSELS - AND ONE OF THEM'S REAL MEAN...



THEN, SUDDENLY, IN A HAMMERING BURST OF MACHINE GUN FIRE, GANGLAND STRUCK...

IT'S THEM!
IT'S GALLO'S -
AAAARGH!

TAKA TAKA
TAT TAT

BEJABERS! -
HOODS!



BEN LIFTED HIS HEAD JUST IN TIME TO SEE THE SPRAWLING
POLICEMAN TRIGGER WILDLY AT THE ESCAPING ASSASSIN...



BEN NOLAN'S EYES WERE FULL OF BITTERNESS
AS HE LOOKED ACROSS THE BULLET-RIDDLED CAFE.



WITH HEAVY HEART, BEN NOLAN PHONED THE EDITOR OF THE CLARION TO "KILL" THE BLACKIE GALLO STORY...

"WE'LL KEEP WORKING ON IT, BEN! BY THE WAY, A PAL OF YOURS RANG THROUGH - SOMETHING ABOUT YOU BEING LATE FOR A MEETING. HE SAID HIS NAME WAS OHLSON!

SWEDE!
THE FIVE-YEAR REUNION!
I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT IT!
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE AN HOUR AGO!

SWEDE WAS WAITING FOR HIM AT JOE'S STEAK-HOUSE...

SWEDE, IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOU AGAIN! AND NICK - WHERE'S HE?

HE NOT TURN UP YET, NEITHER! BUT NICK, HE RING ME AT THE GYMNASIUM EARLIER. NICK'S NOT FORGOTTEN!



HARDLY HAD THE WORDS LEFT
SWEDE OHLSON'S MOUTH,
WHEN...

BEN! SWEDE!
SORRY, I'M LATE -
BUT I HAD A
LAST-MINUTE JOB
THROWN AT ME!

MUST BE GOOD
JOB, NICKY! YA,
THAT SUIT LOOK
LIKE IT COST
PLENTY DOLLARS
ALL RIGHT!



NICK SHAFTER GRIMACED WITH
PAIN AS SWEDE STRETCHED
OUT A MASSIVE FRIENDLY HAND...

COME SIT
DOWN, NICKY.
YOU TELL US
HOW WE MAKE
MUCH MONEY,
TOO - YA?

AAAGH!
EASE OFF,
SWEDE! I
JUST BEEN TO
A SAWBONES
WITH THAT
ARM - IT'S ALL
BANDAGED
UP!



IT WAS THEN THAT A VOICE BROKE IN...

I'M SORRY,
NICKY! HOW YOU
HURT ARM..?

SHUT UP, BIG
FELLER! I'VE
GOT THINGS
TO SAY TO YOUR
PAL HERE!

BLACKIE
GALLO!

THE RACKETEER GLARED AT BEN
NOLAN...

TOUGH ABOUT
LEFTY, NOLAN!
AND IT'LL BE
TOUGHER ON
YOU - IF YOU AND
THAT RAG KEEP
NEEDLIN' ME!

ALL BEN'S HATRED FOR THIS HUMAN VULTURE SUDDENLY EXPLODED WITHIN HIM...

I'LL GET YOU YET, GALLO! I SWEAR I WILL!



GALLO'S BODYGUARDS SNATCHED FOR THEIR HIDDEN GUNS - BUT NICK SHAFTER WAS FASTER...

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE! LEAVE THEM GATS RIGHT WHERE THEY ARE!

YOU'RE RIGHT, NICK BOY! ANY SHOOTING WHILE I'M AROUND - AND THE LAW'S GOT ME DEAD-TO-RIGHTS! YOU'RE A SMART KID, NICK!







ANOTHER YEAR PASSED, IN WHICH SWEDE OHLSON
BATTLED HIS WAY TO RING STARDOM...

THE SWEDE'S
GOT HIM GROGGY!
NOW, SWEDE, NOW -
PUT HIM DOWN!



AND NO MATTER HOW BUSY HE
WAS IN HIS UNCEASING CRUSADE
AGAINST CRIME, BEN NOLAN
NEVER FAILED TO LISTEN IN TO
ANY OF HIS FRIEND'S FIGHTS...

... OHLSON'S STEPPED BACK! HE'S GIVING HOGAN A
CHANCE TO RECOVER FROM THAT BATTERING! OH,
WHAT A MAGNIFICENT, SPORTING GESTURE!



AND STRANGELY ENOUGH, NO MATTER HOW BUSY HE WAS, NICK SHAFTER NEVER MISSED ONE OF SWEDE'S FIGHTS, EITHER...

... AND HOGAN'S DOWN! IT LOOKS LIKE OHLSON'S FIGHT, FOLKS!

NICK, THIS IS CRAZY! WE GOT A CAR-FUL OF HIGH-JACKED LOOK OUT THERE! THE COPS ARE LOOKING FOR US - AND YOU STOP TO LISTEN TO A FIGHT!

SHUDDUP! SWEDE OHLSON USED TO BE A PAL OF MINE!

NICK WAITED FOR THE COUNT-OUT, THEN...

PITY YOU COULDN'T LISTEN IN TOO, RED. BUT I NEEDED A GOOD GUY OUT HERE!

NICK'S GETTIN' PRETTY BIG FOR HIS BOOTS THESE DAYS. HOW DO YOU LIKE HIM PICKING THAT POKER-FACED RED MAGILL OUT OF NOWHERE - AND TRAINING HIM TO BE HIS OWN PERSONAL BODYGUARD!



BLACKIE GALLO HAD ALSO NOTICED THAT NICK SHAFTER DID NOT HOLD HIM IN AS MUCH RESPECT AS HE USED...

THANKS, BLACKIE! I KNEW YOU'D AGREE TO CUTTING ME IN ON A BIGGER SHARE OF THE TAKE! AFTER ALL, THIS HEIST WAS MY IDEA, WASN'T IT?

BLACKIE, HUH! THAT GUY'S GETTING TOO BIG FOR HIS BOOTS!



WHEN NICK HAD GONE...

THAT SWEDE FRIEND OF NICK'S - HE'S DOWN FOR A BIG FIGHT TOMORROW NIGHT, AIN'T HE?

YEAH, BOSS! THE WINNER GETS A POKE AT THE CHAMPEEN!



THEY SAY THE SWEDE'S A CINH TO WIN, TOO, BOSS!

THAT'S WHAT I HEARD! SO ALL THE SUCKERS WHO USE MY BETTING SHOPS WILL HAVE THEIR MONEY ON HIM TO WIN, RIGHT? SO I COULD MAKE A PACKET IF THE SWEDE DON'T WIN, RIGHT?





HEART POUNDING WITH MOUNTING FEAR, SWEDE OHLSON
DASHED INTO A WAREHOUSE-LINED SIDESTREET, BUT...

THIS
IS GOING
TO BE A
LAUGH!

ANOTHER
ONE! AND NO
OTHER WAY
TO GO!



SWEDE FLATTENED AGAINST THE WALL, HIS EYES DAZZLED BY THE BLAZING HEADLIGHTS...



BUT WITH DEATH ONLY INCHES AWAY ...





WHEN THE GANGSTERS HAD DRIVEN OFF, SWEDE TELEPHONED HIS FRIEND...

SWEDE OHLSON NODDED, TURNING BEN'S WORDS OVER IN HIS MIND...



WHAT I DO, BEN, EH? YOU TELL ME WHAT I MUST DO!

I'VE A FEELING GALLO'S BEHIND IT. SO I DON'T THINK IT WAS A BLUFF! THE POLICE COULD PROTECT YOU FOR A WHILE - BUT NOT FOR EVER, SWEDE!

BEN, I THINK THIS - BOXING'S BEEN GOOD TO ME! I NOT GOING TO MAKE SOMETHING DIRTY OF IT - JUST BECAUSE OF RAT LIKE BLACKIE GALLO! I FIGHT TO WIN!

LOOK, SWEDE - I KNOW IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT I'LL BE THERE WITH YOU TOMORROW NIGHT! WE'LL SEE IT THROUGH TOGETHER!

AND SO, THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, BEFORE A STADIUM JAMMED WITH FANS, SWEDE OHLSON FOUGHT THE BRAVEST FIGHT OF HIS LIFE - AGAINST CHAMPIONSHIP CONTENDER, SAILOR AMES.



ROUND TWO!

LET'S GO, SWEDE!

COME ON, SAILOR, GIVE HIM THE OLD ONE-TWO-THREE NOW!

GALLO WAS AT THE RINGSIDE, FROWNING AT THE WAY THE FIGHT WAS GOING...



BOSS, THE SWEDE'S THROWIN' PUNCHES LIKE HE MEANS IT! THAT ALMOST PUT SAILOR AMES DOWN FOR THE COUNT!

THAT'S SHOWIN' HIM, SWEDE, BOY! NOW ANOTHER ONE!

NOT FAR AWAY, IN NICK SHAFTER'S
HOTEL SUITE...



... SAILOR
LOOKS WORRIED!
AND I DON'T
BLAME HIM...!

THAT'S A LAUGH!
WHY SHOULD SAILOR
WORRY - WHEN IT'S ALL
FIXED FOR THE SWEDE TO
TAKE A DIVE?

THE HOODLUM SUDDENLY FOUND
HIMSELF FACING THE BLAZING
WRATH OF NICK SHAFTER...



WHAT'S THAT YOU SAID?
SPILL IT, YOU TWO-BIT
PUNK! WHAT WAS
THAT ABOUT SWEDE OHLSON
THROWING THE FIGHT?

TAKE IT EASY, NICK!
I THOUGHT EVERYONE KNEW!
BLACKIE'S BOYS ROUGHED-UP THE SWEDE
LAST NIGHT - AND GAVE HIM
THE OLD 'OR ELSE'!

NICK SHAFTER'S THIN CHEST WAS HEAVING, HIS BONY FACE TWISTED INTO A MASK OF ANGRY HATRED.

BLACKIE GALLO DID THIS TO GET AT ME! THE FAT FOOL! DOESN'T HE KNOW A MAN LIKE OHLSON DOESN'T SCARE? COME ON -- WE GOT A JOB TO DO!

... SAILOR AMES IS COVERING UP! OHLSON'S MOVING IN...

HERE'S YOUR COAT, BOSS!

FIVE MINUTES, AND ONE ROUND LATER...

POWWWW!
THAT DOES IT!
IT'S THE SWEDE'S
FIGHT FOR
SURE!

FIFTY THOUSAND
BUCKS THAT GUY'S JUST LOST
ME! ALL RIGHT, THIS IS
WHERE HE GETS HIS!

WHEN THE LAST FAN HAD GONE HOME, AND THE STADIUM WAS QUIET AND EMPTY...

MAYBE I
SHOULDN'T HAVE
LET YOU PERSUADE
ME, SWEDE.
MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE
ARRANGED A POLICE
ESCORT!

BUT LIKE YOU SAID,
BEN. WITH SO MUCH CRIME,
HOW LONG CAN
POLICE PROTECT ME? NO, IF
ANYTHING IS TO
HAPPEN, LET'S GET IT OVER
AND DONE WITH!

THERE
HE IS! AND
THE GUY WITH
HIM IS BEN
NOLAN!

ONCE AGAIN, SWEDE FOUND HIMSELF BATHED IN SUDDENLY SWITCHED-ON HEADLIGHTS...

IT'S THEM!
RUN - BEN -
RUN!

MOVE IN
REAL CLOSE!
AND YOU - HAVE THAT
TOMMY READY!
I WANT YOU TO
VENTILATE THE BOTH
OF THEM!



AS BEN AND SWEDE DASHED AROUND THE CORNER, ANOTHER CAR CAME HURLING PAST IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION...

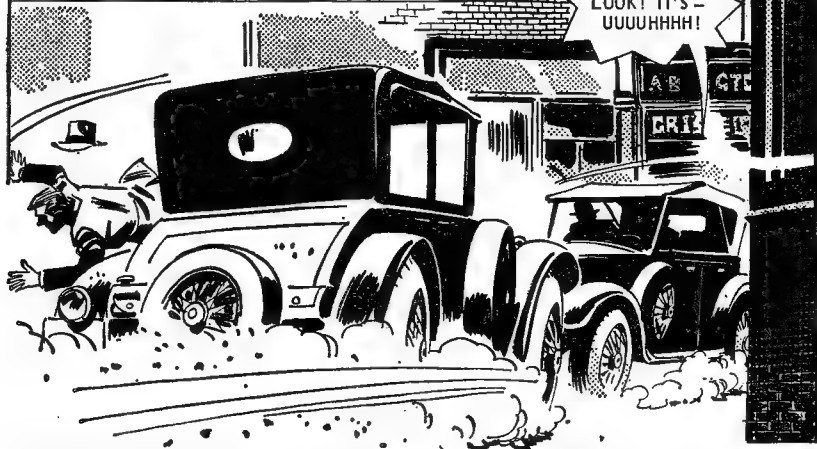
GET TO
COVER! INTO A
DOORWAY -
QUICK!

GOOD
GRIEF! IT'S
NICK!



THE TWO CARS WERE CHARGING TOWARDS EACH OTHER –
WHEN NICK SHAFTER DIVED OUT OF HIS DRIVING SEAT...

BOSS,
LOOK! IT'S –
UUUUHHH!



AND A SECOND LATER...

AAAARGH!



THE TATTERED FIGURE OF BLACKIE GALLO STAGGERED FROM THE BLAZING WRECKAGE - STRAIGHT INTO A HAIL OF TOMMY GUN LEAD.

NO! PLEASE!
DON'T - AAAHHH!

HOPE YOU DON'T
MIND, BOSS! BUT
I DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY
HE TRIED TO TURN
RAT ON YOU!



THERE WAS PRIDE IN NICK SHAFTER'S EYES AS HE BEAMED A SMILE AT THE YOUNG KILLER!

YOU'RE A GOOD
KID, RED!
YOU'LL BE BIG-
TIME YOURSELF
SOME DAY!

NOT FOR ME, BOSS! I
JUST WANT TO BE
AROUND TO LOOK
AFTER YOU! BECAUSE
I APPRECIATE ALL
YOU'VE DONE FOR ME!



NICK'S SMILE VANISHED AS HE TURNED TO
FACE SUEDE OHLSON...

THANKS,
NICKY! YOU
SAVED MY
LIFE!

THAT'S RIGHT, SUEDE! YOU
SAVED MY LIFE - AND NOW I'VE
SAVED YOURS! THAT'S ONE
DEBT I'VE PAID OFF! ONLY
BEN TO RECKON WITH NOW!



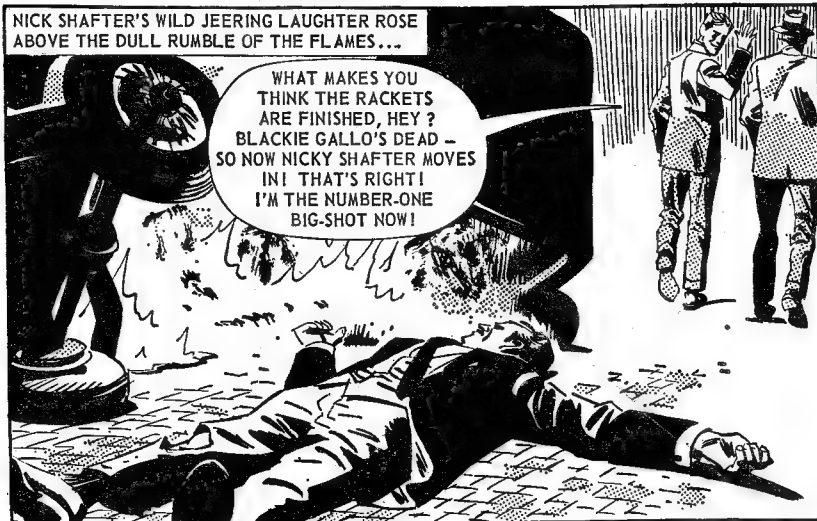
GALLO'S DEAD! THAT'S PAYMENT ENOUGH FOR ME, NICK! CHICAGO WILL BE CLEANER NOW - WITHOUT HIS RACKETS TO CORRUPT ITS CITIZENS!

ARE YOU CRAZY?



NICK SHAFTER'S WILD JEERING LAUGHTER ROSE ABOVE THE DULL RUMBLE OF THE FLAMES...

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THE RACKETS ARE FINISHED, HEY? BLACKIE GALLO'S DEAD - SO NOW NICKY SHAFTER MOVES IN! THAT'S RIGHT! I'M THE NUMBER-ONE BIG-SHOT NOW!



IN THE YEAR THAT FOLLOWED, NICK SHAFTER AND HIS TWO FORMER FRIENDS GREW EVEN FARTHER APART. NICK BECAME MORE POWERFUL, AND BEN, MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER TO STAMP OUT THE EVIL OF GANGSTERDOM...

PHREW! BEN, THIS IS GOING TO MAKE SHAFTER SIT UP! HE'S NOT GOING TO LIKE IT ONE BIT!

HE ISN'T SUPPOSED TO! I WANT TO USE EVERYTHING I CAN TO MAKE CHICAGO TOO HOT FOR SHAFTER - AND HOODLUMS LIKE HIM!

WHEN THE CLARION APPEARED THE NEXT MORNING....

THAT DO-GOODING JERK! ONE DAY I'M GONNA FORGET I OWE HIM FOR MY LIFE! HE'S STARTIN' TO GET ME MAD!

THE
VIOLENCE IN
CITY INCREASES
UNDER NEW
CRIME BOSS!
Nick Shafter
Now Chicago's
Worst Enemy



THREE DAYS LATER, THE MOB HI-JACKED
A FLEET OF LOOT-LOADED TRUCKS...

RED, YOU FOLLOW
ME WITH THE LAST
TRUCK, RIGHT! KEEP AN
EYE ON OUR REAR!

OKAY,
NICK - I MEAN -
BOSS!

AS RED AND HIS HOODLUM-DRIVER
FOLLOWED NICK'S TRUCK...

WHAT WORRIES ME IS THAT NICK'S GETTING SOFT!
THAT NOLAN GUY COULD MAKE THINGS REALLY HOT
FOR US, BUT NICK WON'T TOUCH A HAIR OF HIS
DARNED HEAD!

THE BOYS
WOULD BE A
SIGHT HAPPIER
IF IT WAS YOU
RUNNING THE OUTFIT,
RED. WE KNOW
YOU'D FIX
NOLAN!

THEN FROM BEHIND THEM, WAILING THROUGH THE NIGHT, CAME THE SOUND OF SIRENS...



COPS!
WE DON'T STAND
A HOPE OF SHAKING
THEM OFF WITH
THESE TRUCKS,
RED!

THERE IS A WAY!
AND A WAY IN WHICH WE
CAN KILL TWO BIRDS
WITH ONE STONE. GRAB THAT
WHEEL TIGHTER -
YOU'LL HAVE SOME TRICKY
DRIVING TO DO!

LEANING FROM THE CAB WINDOW, RED
MAGILL SIGHTED ALONG THE BARREL
TOWARDS THE TRUCK IN FRONT - AND
SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER...



BOSS!
MAGILL!
HE'S SHOOTIN'
AT US!

RED!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?

SHUT UP!
KEEP YOUR
MIND ON YOUR
DRIVING!

FOR A FEW SECONDS, NICK'S TRUCK SKIDDED SCREECHINGLY FROM ONE SIDE OF THE ROAD TO THE OTHER, THEN...



AN INSTANT LATER, NICK'S BULLET-RIDDLED TRUCK SMASHED ON TO ITS SIDE...



SO RED MAGILL'S TURNED AGAINST THE HAND THAT FED HIM, HEY! HE AIMS TO BOSS THE RACKETS FOR HIMSELF, DOES HE? WELL, NICK SHAFTER AIN'T THROUGH YET - BY A LONG CHALK!

THE COPS HAVE SEEN US! WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?



BEFORE ANSWERING, NICK LED THE WAY INTO THE BRUSH...

WE GOT THE ADVANTAGE OF HIGH GROUND, MAC. YOU GET DOWN INTO THIS HOLLOW AND POUR LEAD AT 'EM! I'LL DO THE SAME THING FROM THAT HOLLOW OVER THERE!

OKAY, BOSS! THE TWO OF US - WE SHOULD BE A MATCH FOR 'EM, RIGHT?



FOR A FEW MINUTES, THE SCARED HOODLUM TRIGGERED AWAY AT THE CAUTIOUSLY-NEARING POLICEMEN, UNTIL SOMETHING REGISTERED ON HIS FEAR-MUDDLED MIND.

I... I
AIN'T HEARD NO
SHOOTING FROM
NICK!



PUZZLEMENT TURNED TO PANIC...

NICK!
NICK! I
CAN'T DO
THIS ALONE!
NICK...!

THERE'S
ONE OF
THEM!



NEXT INSTANT, A DOZEN POLICE SPECIALS SPAT FLAME...

NICK!
YOU LEFT ME TO -
AAHH!



BUT THE LOYAL HOODLUM HAD DONE WHAT NICK SHAFTER WANTED...



THE LONE DRIVER GASPED WITH ALARM AS THE MENACING FIGURE LEAPT OUT INTO THE GLARE OF HIS HEADLIGHTS...



THE DRIVER BRAKED - AND FLUNG HIMSELF OUT OF THE DOOR.





BUT THAT WAS WHERE NICK SHAFTER MADE
ONE MORE MISTAKE, FOR TEN MINUTES
LATER...

DARN IT!
NOW HE'S GOT
A CAR, SHAFTER
COULD BE
FIFTY MILES
AWAY!

NOT IN MY CAR HE
WON'T, OFFICER.
THERE WAS LESS THAN
A GALLON OF GAS LEFT
IN THE TANK. IT'LL
JUST ABOUT TAKE HIM
TO MY HUNTING CABIN
— SOME TWELVE
MILES THAT WAY!



WHEN THE POLICE REACHED
THE HUNTING SHACK...

THERE'S
THE CAR! SHAFTER
MUST HAVE TAKEN A
LOOK AT THE
FUEL GAUGE AND
REALISED HE
COULDN'T GO ANY
FARTHER!

YEAH!
BUT WHERE'S
SHAFTER? DID HE
TAKE TO THE
WOODS?



THE ANSWER CAME IN A HAIL OF MACHINE GUN LEAD...



A CLARION POLICE REPORTER PHONED THE NEWS TO BEN NOLAN...



BEN'S PHONE CALL HAD BEEN TO SWEDE OHLSON...



BUT THE SIEGE WAS STILL ON WHEN BEN AND SWEDE ARRIVED AT THE SCENE...



BUT I HAVE SENT ONE OF OUR BEST MARKSMEN UP THERE ON TO THAT BLUFF! IF SHAFTER SHOWS HIMSELF - HE'LL GET HIM!

LOOK... MAYBE I CAN GET SHAFTER TO GIVE HIMSELF UP!



WE USED TO BE FRIENDS! MAYBE HE'LL LISTEN TO ME! AND, WELL, IF IT'S GOING TO SAVE LIVES - I'D LIKE TO TRY IT!

IT'S A TERRIBLE RISK YOU'LL BE TAKING, NOLAN. BUT ALMOST ANYTHING'S WORTH A TRY!



INSIDE THE BESIEGED SHACK, NICK SHAFTER'S EYES WIDENED AS A SHADOWY FIGURE STEPPED OUT FROM COVER!



NICK!
THIS IS ME -
BEN! I'VE GOT TO
TALK TO YOU,
NICK!

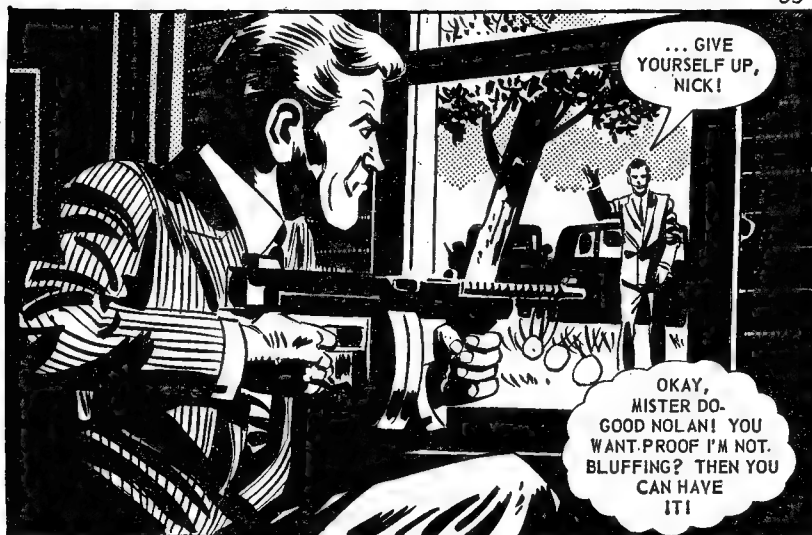
THE FOOL!
DOES HE THINK I
WON'T SHOOT HIM?

SHAFTER'S REPLY WAS HOARSE AND
WILD WITH RAGE AND DESPERATION...



KEEP AWAY,
NOLANI! I'LL HAVE
NO GRIEF ABOUT MOWING YOU
DOWN! IT WAS YOU AND THAT
NEWSPAPER THAT TRIGGERED
OFF ALL THIS -
SO GET BACK!

NICK!
IT'S HOPELESS
FOR YOU! DON'T
TAKE ANY MORE LIVES,
NICK! DON'T
KILL ANY
MORE...!



SPLINTERS FLEW LIKE DRIVEN RAIN AS A BURST OF GUNFIRE RAKED A TREE ONLY INCHES FROM NOLAN'S SIDE...



HIGH ON A BLUFF OVERLOOKING THE SIEGE, A POLICE OFFICER SQUINTED THROUGH HIS TELESCOPIC SIGHT...

YOU KNOW WHY I'M DOING THIS, BEN? BECAUSE I COULD HAVE KILLED YOU - AND I HAVEN'T! YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS - I'VE SAVED YOUR LIFE LIKE YOU SAVED MINE!

THAT'S HIM! I CAN SEE HIS GUN-FLAME THROUGH THE REAR WINDOW!

SLOWLY THE POLICE MARKSMAN ON THE BLUFF SQUEEZED HIS TRIGGER, AND...

WE'RE QUITS NOW! I DON'T - AAAHH!



IT WAS BEN NOLAN WHO REACHED THE DYING GANGSTER FIRST ...



THE POLICE COMMISSIONER LOOKED DOWN AT THE STILL FIGURE OF THE MAN WHO HAD ONCE BEEN A 'KING' ...

HE GOT WHAT WAS COMING TO HIM! HE DESERVED TO BE SHOT DOWN - LIKE THE MAD DOG HE WAS!

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT! BUT IT WAS FATE THAT TOOK HIM TO WAR - AND GAVE HIM A GUN - AND TAUGHT HIM HOW TO KILL!



I THINK OF WHAT YOU SAY BACK THERE, BEN. YOU AND ME, WE WERE TAUGHT TO KILL, TOO. A LOT OF GUYS LIKE US WERE...

BUT NICK WAS A COWARD, REMEMBER? AND LIKE A LOT OF COWARDS - A GUN IN HIS HAND WAS THE ONLY THING THAT MADE HIM FEEL 'BRAVE'!



AS WAS GANGLAND'S CUSTOM, 'MAD DOG' SHAFTER WAS GIVEN A MAGNIFICENT FUNERAL - AND AMONGST THE 'MOURNERS', WAS RED MAGILL...



SWEDE, YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE I'VE REALISED? BLACKIE GALLO 'GAVE BIRTH' TO MAD DOG SHAFTER. AND HE 'GAVE BIRTH' TO RED MAGILL. IT SEEMS THAT EVIL BREEDS EVIL...



... BUT IT WOULD ALSO APPEAR THAT EVIL DESTROYS EVIL! AND IT'LL BE HIS TURN NEXT!

WILLING CAPTIVE

THE TRAMP OF MARCHING FEET, THE WHINE OF SHOT AND SHELL, THE GLORY AND EXCITEMENT OF BATTLE . . . ALL THIS IS HEADY AND INTOXICATING WINE TO THE BRAVE . . . AND THERE WERE MANY SUCH VALIANT FIGHTERS WHO STORMED INTO FRANCE IN THE INVADING PRUSSIAN ARMY IN 1870 . . .



BUT PRIVATE WALTER SCHNAFFS WAS NOT ONE OF THESE, FAT AND PEACE-LOVING, THE FATHER OF FOUR CHILDREN, HE HATED ALL WEAPONS OF WAR, ABOVE ALL, THE BAYONET . . . WHICH HE KNEW HE COULD NOT HANDLE WITH ENOUGH SPEED TO PROTECT HIS ROTUND STOMACH!



AH! I CANNOT GO ON! SUPPOSE I AM KILLED? WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY POOR CHILDREN?

THERE SEEMED NO ESCAPE . . . ONE DAY, SCHNAFFS WAS SENT OUT WITH A PATROL THROUGH A SMALL VALLEY . . . SUDDENLY THERE CAME A HEAVY BURST OF FIRE WHICH KILLED OR WOUNDED A SCORE OF MEN . . . THEN A GANG OF PARTISANS CAME PLUNGING OUT OF A COPSE . . . AND CHARGED !

GET UNDER COVER !
SCHNAFFS . . . GET
DOWN BEFORE
YOU'RE
KILLED !



BUT ICY FEAR FROZE WALTER SCHNAFFS' FEET TO THE GROUND . . .



. . . WITH THE LEAN, SHOUTING FRENCHMEN LEAPING TOWARDS HIM LIKE A HERD OF GOATS, HE REALISED DIMLY THAT HIS FAT LITTLE LEGS WOULD NEVER CARRY HIM TO SAFETY !

SIX YARDS AHEAD OF HIM WAS A WIDE DITCH, FILLED WITH UNDERGROWTH .



SCHNAFFS DIVED STRAIGHT INTO IT . . . FEET FIRST !

WHEN HE LOOKED UP, HE COULD SEE THE SKY ABOVE, THROUGH THE ROUND HOLE HIS BODY HAD MADE IN THE CREEPER AND BRANCHES OVERHEAD.



GASPING AND PANTING, HE CRAWLED ALONG THE BOTTOM OF THE DITCH ON ALL FOURS . . .



WITH SWEAT POURING DOWN HIS FAT FACE IN RIVULETS, HE SLITHERED AWAY FROM THE SCENE OF BATTLE. FOR SOME TIME HE COULD HEAR THE FIRING, THE SCREAMS OF THE WOUNDED AND THE SHOUTS. THEN SILENCE FELL . . .



IT WAS GETTING DARK. WHAT WAS HE TO DO? AS A PRISONER, HE WOULD BE FINISHED WITH THE WAR AND WOULD LIVE IN A QUIET, COMFORTABLE PRISON. HE WOULD BE SAFE! BUT THEN HIS THOUGHTS RAN ON AND HIS SKIN GREW COLD . . .

BUT . . . BUT THE PEASANTS. THEY WOULD MURDER ME WITH THEIR PITCHFORKS AND SHOVELS! AND . . . AND THE PARTISANS. THEY WOULD KILL ME JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT! WHAT OF THE FRENCH ARMY? IF I WAS SEEN ALONE, THEY WOULD SHOOT ME DOWN . . .

IT WAS DAWN ON THE THIRD DAY WHEN HE CAUTIOUSLY POKED HIS HELMETED HEAD UP THROUGH THE UNDERGROWTH ABOVE THE DITCH.

FOOD!
IF I DO NOT DIE FROM A BULLET,
IT WILL BE FROM STARVATION.
I... MUST... EAT!

FROM AN OPEN WINDOW ON THE GROUND FLOOR THERE CAME THE DELICIOUS, MOUTH-WATERING ODOUR OF COOKING. IT DREW HIM LIKE A MAGNET, GIVING HIM THE COURAGE OF DESPAIR.

I DARE NOT ENTER OPENLY. I MUST FIND A WAY IN . . . YES! THAT'S IT . . . I'LL GET IN SECRETLY . . .

INSIDE THE ROOM, EIGHT SERVANTS WERE JUST SITTING DOWN TO SUPPER, WHEN SUDDENLY, THE SPIKED HELMET AND FAT FACE OF WALTER SCHNAFFS APPEARED FRAMED IN THE WINDOW!



EIGHT VOICES RANG OUT IN CRIES OF PANIC AND THE SERVANTS LEAPED UP AND FOUGHT AND STRUGGLED TO REACH THE DOOR. CHAIRS WERE FLUNG BACK AND THE MEN ELBOWED THE WOMEN ASIDE IN THEIR FEAR.



SCNAFFS STOOD THERE OPEN-MOUTHED FOR A MOMENT. THEN, AFTER HESITATING, HE THREW A FAT LEG OVER THE SILL AND CLIMBED IN.



HE DRANK... AND DRANK... HE CLEANED UP EVERY PLATE, EVERY DISH, EVERY BOTTLE. THEN, BLOWN WITH FOOD AND CIDER AND WINE, ALMOST UNABLE TO BREATHE, SHAKING WITH HICCUPS, HIS HEAD FELL BACK... **PEACEFULLY ASLEEP!**



THE MOON WAS SHINING FITFULLY THROUGH THE TREES AND THE BIRDS WERE JUST RAISING THEIR SWEET VOICES TO HERALD THE DAWN. WHEN SHADY FIGURES BEGAN TO CREEP THROUGH THE UNDER-GROWTH TOWARDS THE SILENT CHATEAU...



THEN, A TRUMPET SOUNDED . . . AND A WAVE OF YELLING MEN CHARGED THE CHATEAU . . .



FIFTY FRENCH SOLDIERS BURST INTO THE KITCHEN WHERE WALTER WAS GENTLY SLEEPING. FIFTY LOADED RIFLES AND FIFTY BAYONETS WERE THRUST AT HIM.

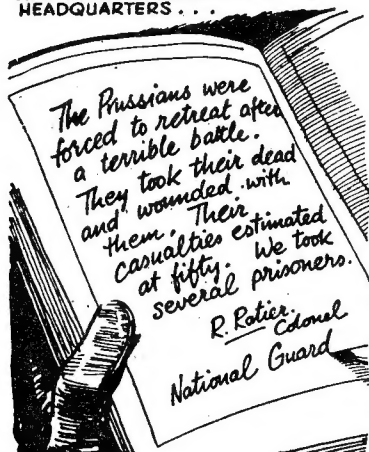


DAZED AND SHAKEN, BRUISED AND BATTERED, SCHNAFFS WAS TRUSSSED UP LIKE A FOWL FOR THE OVEN. AS A FRENCH COLONEL REGARDED HIM TRIUMPHANTLY, AN OFFICER RUSHED IN AND SALUTED . . .

THE ENEMY HAVE ALL FLED FOR THEIR LIVES, SIR!. SOME OF THEM APPEAR TO BE WOUNDED. WE ARE MASTERS OF THE SITUATION . . . THE CHATEAU IS OURS!



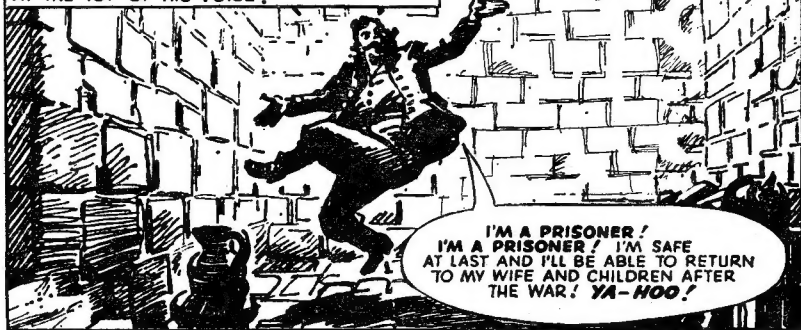
THE COLONEL DRAGGED A FIELD POCKET BOOK FROM HIS JACKET AND WROTE A DESPATCH TO HEADQUARTERS . . .



THE POPULATION OF THE LITTLE MARKET TOWN OF LA ROCHE-OYSEL WERE WAITING WITH IMMENSE EXCITEMENT. JEERS AND SHOUTS AROSE AS THEY SAW THE PRISONER'S SPIKED HELMET IN THE MIDST OF THE NATIONAL GUARDS. FISTS WERE SHAKEN AND THREATS WERE HURLED . . .



PRIVATE WALTER SCHNAFFS WAS TAKEN TO THE TOWN HALL AND THROWN INTO THE LOCK-UP. IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT HIS POSITION DAWNED UPON HIM. HE JUMPED UP AND DANCED MADLY AROUND THE CELL, SINGING AND SHOUTING AT THE TOP OF HIS VOICE!



Published each month by IPC Magazines Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Printed by Fleetway Printers, 17 Sumner Street, London, S.E.1. Subscription Rates: £2.0.0 for 24 numbers, £1.0.0 for 12 numbers. Sole Agents: Australia and New Zealand, Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; South Africa, Central News Agency, Ltd.; Rhodesia and Zambia, Kingstons, Ltd. ACTION PICTURE LIBRARY is sold subject to the following conditions, that it shall not, without the written consent of the Publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price shown on the cover; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition, or in any unauthorised cover by way of Trade; or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.

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